

La Voz de Esperanza

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¿SU VOTO



ES SU VOZ?

Is Your Vote Your Voice?

La Voz de Esperanza

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We ask that articles be visionary, progressive,
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cover art:
"Don't Take It Personally" 2003
by Rita María Contreras

Is our vote really our voice? • ¿Su voto es su voz?

October 4th will be the last day to register to vote, allowing U.S. citizens to vote in the 2004 presidential election. But, to vote or not to vote is the question. Do we really have a choice? Do we really have candidates who represent the interests of the people in the U.S. and around the world? Will our vote "count?" And, for what?

The artwork on the cover of this issue of La Voz is by Rita María Contreras, one of the artists in the ¡W.A.R.R.R! art show currently on exhibit at the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center. The painting, *Don't Take It Personally* (22x30, oil on paper), depicts the artist standing in front of the U.S. flag, in distress. In her artist statement she comments:

The figure in the piece is myself, and I am anguished about my country's actions with respect to the war in Iraq. I had been in Mexico on March 19, 2003 and Mexico was against the U.S. pursuing this war game. I had protested in February and was dead-set against this invented excuse Bush had for raising his stature. I was terribly disappointed in the lack of courage exhibited by the Democrats in Congress.

I continue to cry as I see my beautiful nephew in uniform. But War is a god. War gives life meaning to those who actually fight in it. And it gives the defense and oil businesses more money. And that's the bottom line, isn't it???

As Antonio Cabral notes in his article, "The 2004 Elections: The U.S. at a Crossroad," in the September, 2004 issue of La Voz, U.S. corporations have become the invisible government from city hall to Washington. He warns, "That is the fundamental threat that the U.S. civil society faces and must confront regardless of which party controls the White House and Congress."

It is the corporatization of politics, local and global, that we must actively fight against, with ballots, with pen or paintbrush in hand, with well chosen words loud enough to be heard, with whatever creative means necessary, short of violence and long on loving actions. In the next few weeks, we'll find out whether our vote really is our voice. Somos la voz de Esperanza.

Election Day Goes Underground

Election Day, Election Day, wherefore art thou?

Here I am!

Where?

I'm in the Election Day Protection Program.

Who is protecting you?

The United States Government. The President, Mr. Ashcroft, and Mr. Ridge. They will

tell me when it's safe to come out.

I can't see you. Exactly where are you right now?

I'm being kept at a secret undisclosed location so I won't be disrupted.

For how long?

For as long as the threat of disruption exists.

Who decides that?

The United States Government, of course.

Well...how are you feeling?

...I miss my people.

-Jeff Akins July 14, 2004

Jeff Akins is a San Antonio attorney. He can be reached at his office 599-4905.

VOZ VISION STATEMENT: *La Voz de Esperanza* speaks for many individual, progressive voices who are gente-based, multi-visioned and *milagro-bound*. We are diverse survivors of materialism, racism, misogyny, homophobia, classism, violence, earth-damage, speciesism and cultural and political oppression. We are recapturing the powers of alliance, activism and healthy conflict in order to achieve interdependent economic/spiritual healing and *fuerza*. *La Voz* is a resource for peace, justice, and human rights, providing a forum for criticism, information, education, humor and other creative works. *La Voz* provokes bold actions in response to local and global problems, with the knowledge that the many risks we take for the earth, our body, and the dignity of all people will result in profound change for the seven generations to come.

Expedited Removal Threatens Human Rights

By Yolanda Chávez Leyva

On August 10, the Department of Homeland Security announced that it would expand its use of expedited removal. Under expedited removal, immigrants are deported without first going before a trained immigration judge who decides whether the person may remain in the United States or should be deported. Under the new policy, Border Patrol officers, rather than immigration judges, will make these important decisions.

Expedited removal will go into effect in Tucson, Arizona and Laredo, Texas within a few weeks. The Department of Homeland Security anticipates eventually expanding expedited removal to other areas. Expedited removal has existed at seaports and airports since November 2002. Its extension to the Southwestern land border broadens the authority of thousands of immigration officers.

In 2003, approximately 43,000 persons were deported without judicial review. Officials estimate that the number will double under the new policy. Human Rights First, a non-profit group, has documented numerous problems with expedited removal and has recommended that it be used only in cases of emergencies.

Within a few weeks DHS immigration officers will begin deporting immigrants who are detained within 14 days of their arrival to the United States and within 100 miles of the U.S. border with Canada or Mexico. According to Homeland Security, the new policy is not aimed at Mexicans, but at other immigrants crossing the U.S.-Mexico border.

Homeland Security officials argue that the expanded policy will assist in deterring undocumented immigration, will strengthen border security, and will help speed up deportations. While it will certainly hasten the speed of deportations by omitting judicial review, it is unlikely to discourage undocumented migration. Over the past decade, policies intended to deter migration have resulted primarily in migrants taking higher risks to enter the country. The possible negative effects of the new policy outweigh its potential benefits. Perhaps most glaring in its potential for harm is that the new policy opens the door for increased abuse and errors by immigration officers.

Under expedited removal, Border Patrol officers will have broad decision-making authority over deporting individuals, a dangerous situation given the problems within the Border

Patrol. Since 1992, Human Rights Watch, a non-partisan human rights organization, has documented on-going abuse by Border Patrol agents, ranging from verbal harassment to sexual assault, beatings, and lethal force.

In the Tucson sector, where the new policy will be first implemented, Derechos Humanos, an organization that advocates on behalf of human rights, records continuing problems with Border Patrol officers. These include abuse and harassment of immigrants, both with papers and without, as well as of U.S. citizens. Other organizations have raised the issue of citizens, legal residents, and lawful visitors being deported mistakenly under the new policy.



"California Border Commemoration" by Andrew Weir

Groups that work with refugees also have concerns. According to the Department of Homeland Security, individuals who express a fear of persecution or torture or intend to apply for asylum will be sent to an asylum officer for a "credible fear" interview. A person found to have "credible fear" will be referred to a judge. Leaving the initial decision of whether to refer an individual to an asylum officer in the hands of the Border Patrol, often a life and death decision, raises the possibility that individuals who would be eligible for refuge in this country would instead be deported.

Will the federal government be accountable for abuses and errors under the new system? Will the Border Patrol answer to such complaints? Human rights organizations have complained for years that the government often fails to investigate complaints against Border Patrol officials. The new policy will only exacerbate the situation.

Although the United States has every right to patrol its borders, it also has the obligation to defend human rights and to ensure that our laws are carried out in a humane and lawful manner. Removing the systems of checks and balances that is part of the deportation process threatens the human rights of immigrants and citizens like.

Yolanda Chávez Leyva is a historian specializing in Mexican-American and border history at the University of Texas at El Paso.

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This article was first published by The Progressive.

Photo by Andrew Weir used with permission of the Religious Task Force on Central America and Mexico.

INDISPUTABLE CAMPAIGN FACTS

by Patrisia Gonzales and Roberto Rodríguez

Politics has evolved to the point where nowadays even the truth is partisan. That being the case, we've been wondering if it's actually possible for the political parties to put together a list of uncontested facts that would help voters decide. We believe the answer is no, though. Because we've never endorsed a candidate, ever, we've decided to take a crack at it ourselves. Here are a few:

1 In the disputed 2000 presidential election, Al Gore won the popular vote. It took a Supreme Court decision for George W. Bush to claim the Electoral College victory, thus, the presidency.

2 On Sept. 11, 2001, close to 3,000 people were killed by al-Qaida -- whose leader, Osama bin Laden, was supported by the CIA in the 1980s (as was Saddam Hussein). He has not been caught.

3 President Bush opposed the creation of the 9/11 commission. Said commission concluded that Iraq was not in league with al-Qaida on the 9/11 attacks, did not possess WMDs, nor did it constitute an imminent threat to the United States.

4 The United Nations did not sanction the Iraq invasion of 2003. Additionally, the nation is deeply divided over the war in Iraq. And the war is highly unpopular throughout the world, which includes U.S. allies and those in the Muslim/Arab world.

5 While more than 1,000 coalition troops have died in Iraq, the United States does not count, nor identify, Iraqi deaths.

6 After 12 previous years of deficits, former president Bill Clinton left office with a budget surplus and a declining national debt. Bush has had four years of budget deficits while the debt has skyrocketed.

7 Bush is opposed to the International War Crimes Tribunal, pressuring nations to exempt U.S. troops from its provisions or face economic reprisals. The United Nations recently rejected that pressure. He also opposes treaties that protect the rights of women and the environment, and he opposes land mine treaties and is studying ways to deploy usable nuclear weapons.

8 When it comes to consumers' and workers' rights and safety, the administration consistently favors corporate deregulation.

9 President Bush and Sen. John Kerry essentially support Israel's policy of "targeted assassinations" and do not strenuously object to the wall being built on Palestinian land (the United Nations has condemned it).

10 Bush originally suggested tax cuts as a means to return the surplus to taxpayers and then as a means to stimulate job creation.

These facts are subject to interpretation, but they are uncontested. Here are a few more:

1 John Kerry and John Edwards voted in favor of the USA Patriot Act, though they're now in favor of rescinding parts of it. They also voted in favor of granting the president the authority to wage war against Iraq. At the time, U.N. inspectors had not found any WMDs in Iraq nor had they concluded their inspections.

2 Kerry and Edwards turned thumbs down on \$87 billion for the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.

3 Neither Kerry nor Edwards favors amending the Constitution -- for abortion, gay rights, flag protection or any other reason.

4 Neither Sen. Russ Feingold nor Sen. Robert Byrd was invited to address the recent Democratic convention. Feingold is the only senator to vote against the Patriot Act. Byrd was the fiercest Senate critic of the Iraqi invasion. Filmmaker Michael Moore, director/producer of "Fahrenheit 9/11," was not even invited by the party to attend.

5 While the Democratic Party has been trying to thwart Ralph Nader's floundering campaign, the Republican Party has been assisting it.

6 Nader has repudiated both parties for their interference, but has not rejected the Republican efforts to assist his campaign.

7 Bush is for "affirmative access," while Kerry supports affirmative action.

8 Though Bush joined the Texas Air National Guard, much about his service is in dispute. Kerry volunteered to go to Vietnam and came back with medals.

9 The Bush administration has repeatedly refused to hand over documents to Congress and investigative commissions. Vice President Dick Cheney's efforts before the courts to shield the identity of his energy task force have been successful.

10 The president has asserted that some prisoners held by the United States fall outside of the protection of the Geneva Conventions, while some administration officials have discussed the issue of postponing the upcoming elections.

It seems as if there should be a nonpartisan commission to do this kind of work every four years. As it is now, as a divided nation, we can't even agree whether the 9/11 commission indicted or vindicated the administration in its march toward war against Iraq.



October 2004 National Domestic Awareness Month Changing the Face of Domestic Violence

...a call to move domestic violence from the hidden corner of shame to a community consciousness of awareness, accountability and response.

P.E.A.C.E. Initiative

1443 S. St. Mary's Street in San Antonio, Texas 78210
(210) 533-2729 Tel / (210) 533-0880 Fax / www.thepeaceinitiative.net

All dates, times and locations are subject to change. Call ahead to confirm the information.

Ongoing and related events (Highlights)

Behind the Badge—Channel 21, throughout September will focus on teen domestic violence in San Antonio.

September peaceCafe—will focus on domestic violence at La Tuna, 100 Probandt (Probandt and Cevallos) from 7:00 -10:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 25, 2004. Call the P.E.A.C.E. Initiative at 533-2729.

Silent Witnesses—Our Lady of the Lake will display silent witnesses throughout the campus during October. These silhouettes symbolize women who have lost their lives to domestic violence.

F.A.C.T. Training—Crisis Teams assisting victims of family violence trainings on Saturdays, October 16th and 23rd and Wednesday, Oct. 20th. Please call Jane Shafer at 207-2136.

Dia de Los Muertos Altar—dedicated to victims of domestic violence will be set up at Market Square from October 24th to November 2nd.

Schedule of Events (Highlights)

Wednesday, September 29, 2004: Events Kick-off

A press conference will be held to start off the month and announce upcoming events.

Place: Our Lady of the Lake University Mall area, 411 S.W. 24th St. **Time:** 11:30 a.m.
Contact: Patricia Castillo **Phone:** (210)533-2729 **Free and open to the public**

Saturday, October 2, 2004: Kid's P.E.A.C.E. Day

Children will engage in nonviolent, peacemaking activities with Cat Paws, entertainment and more.

Place: Milam Park **Time:** 11a.m.—2p.m. **Contact:** Patricia Castillo
Phone: (210) 533-2729 **Free and open to the public**

Wednesday, October 6, 2004: OLLU Panel Discussion

Panel discussion with survivors and domestic violence experts. Question/answer session to follow.

Place: OLLU, Center for Women **Time:** 11:30 a.m. **Contact:** Virginia Valenzuela
Phone: (210) 434-6711 **Free and open to the public**

Monday, October 11, 2004: Una Nueva Esperanza—(conference in spanish)

Fortaleciendo Mujer will sponsor a conference with a focus on supporting single moms.

Place: Holiday Inn (Durango) **Time:** 6:00 p.m. **Contact:** Diana Laura Flores
Phone: (210)533-2495 **Free and open to the public**

Saturday, October 16, 2004: From Pain to Peace Poetry Reading

An evening of poetry supporting the Battered Women's Shelter will be held at Café Revolucion.

Place: 527 El Paso **Time:** 7:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m. **Contact:** Melissa Schulz
Phone: (210)930-3669 **Cost:** \$5.00 donation

Wednesday, October 27, 2004: Phoenix Award Ceremony-S.A. City Employees FCU

Recognizes those who have made efforts to change the consuming effects of domestic violence.

Place: 123 N. Medina **Time:** 6:00 p.m.—7:30 p.m. **Contact:** Patricia Castillo
Phone: (210) 533-2729 **Free and open to the public**

Saturday, October 30, 2004: Lake to Lake 5K Run/Walk

Shuttles provided from Woodlawn Lake to OLLU. Fun activities, prizes, info booths and more at OLLU.

Place: Woodlawn Lake to OLLU **Time:** 7:30 a.m. **Contact:** Adrienne Gomez
Phone: (210)434-6711 **Cost:** \$15 early registration, \$20 on event day

For a complete schedule check the website or call the P.E.A.C.E. Initiative (see above).

Reclaiming Myself: Changing Self, Carving Change

By Josephine Méndez-Negrete

Editor's note: This reflection was written after Josie published her book and as she continues to work through with her sisters and family the issue of incest which she courageously and honestly wrote about in *Las Hijas de Juan: Daughters Betrayed*: Chusma House Publications, San José, CA. The book is available for purchase at the Esperanza Center.

It took 53 long years. But, I finally learned to love myself.

Rearing us on her own as a single mother, Amá exceeded the expectations of the idealized two-parent myth when he was sent to prison. Con la ausencia del esposo y padre de nuestra familia, in his absence Amá, my younger brother and sisters, and my betrayed sisters and I learned to love each other; we grew with each other. Learned to give and accept the right touch. Reclaimed caring and love, we began to claim ownership of our bodies and minds. Walking together on the road to sanity, we began the process of shedding his madness from our midst.

On the way to visit me in San Antonio and having recently spent time with her nina in Los Angeles, my younger sister Sonia brought with her additional pieces of the puzzle- photographs of my younger sibling from back in the day, when we lived in LA. One of the many places we learned to call home, despite the betrayals we endured.

It was this visit with my sister that finally helped me to accept that I could make a difference in the lives of those who have experienced the degradation of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse by a parent. It was my younger sister Sonia, who despite fourteen years difference sagely guided me to this possibility. It was then that we finally talked about growing up inside our family, exposing the skeletons, bone-by-bone, finally making visible the emotional, psychological, and physical violence she witnessed.

The trauma of our upbringing was something that only those sisters who are closer to my age and I had discussed, but with bounded discretion-never threading on the incest that we all had in common. Didn't know he had raped them. Thought and made myself believe that it was only touch, to deal with the horrors of it all.

For me, that picture Sonia had brought back from LA said it all, the injuries were etched on the lines of Amá's body- in her posture. Standing in front of an East Los Angeles Department Store, Amá Alejandrina, Comadre Libertad, and my toddler sister Sonia, who was no older than two years old

when the photo was taken, their faces tell the story. However, to any outsider, the story would not have been evident. Subjects: Just looked shy. Seemed reserved. Didn't like to take pictures. It mirrored Mexican stoicism.

Looking at the images, I could finally see it. Those pictures captured our pain.

The shadows and postures harkened the neglect and invisibility to those amongst us. Reminds me of what others failed to see, could not see, or did not want to see-what we were living we carried in our bodies. These images help me to fill in the gaps. Aghast at what I saw, I finally understood the gripping fear Amá barely managed, a ghost-walker of abuse, doing what she could to stay alive. Since then, I have analyzed this and other photographs because they document the state of our bodies and our mind. Capture hurt. Show pain frozen in time. They help us mourn the loss. They are a testament to our survival.

Black and white. Como nuestra vida. Now, shedding light to our experience.

Living inside the hell created by the man who never earned the right to be called father, in some images somos bultos caminando vivas en el purgatorio de nuestra experiencia. In others, we could make out the call for the assistance that never came, the silent

screams for help. Our body sent the message, no one heard.

El monstruo. El cucuy. El viejo. These names we used to refer to him, he soiled with his deeds.

That Polaroid picture of Amá said it all. Didn't see that before. Why couldn't any one see it? This was not the proud woman I had learned to appreciate. She was ghost-like. She was thinner than I remember. Her hair was disheveled, partially covering her face. It wasn't like the Amá I used to have. She looked old. Defeated. She resembled a Holocaust survivor of a woman, residing inside the torture chamber of what she had hoped would be domestic bliss. Those were the days when denial and denigration colluded with survival, as we kept the silence to stay alive. Cuando otros y yo, que era la lista y la metiche-who saw all-were unable to see anything. Blinded by the violence, we overlooked what was in front of our faces, to stay alive.

"It wasn't as bad as you remember it."

"You don't remember it as bad as it was."

"It wasn't all that bad. We survived!"

"At what cost?"

Photos. Maps of the body and mind. Documents of

experience. Snapshots of life.

Muerta en vida. Un cascarón de mujer, a mere shell.

Amá existed only to protect the nine children she had brought into the world. Had lost the fight with one which nature reclaimed-died of encephalitis at three months. Got spared. Death saved her from betrayal.

Vida en muerta y muerta en vida. Had life because she lived for us. We were her survival and her burden.

Without us, she was alone. Had no one. Only him, a good-for-nothing-husband who terrorized her. Protected him to stop herself from realizing how bad he was. Nothing but a rag doll-mujer sin alma, sin fuerza, y sin espíritu. Betrayed.

Mujer, spiritually and psychologically vanquished, who became what he wished her to be, when he didn't get his way, or if she got in his way. She was a maid who served his every need.

Thud. Slap. Push.

"It wasn't that bad. Tú vives en el dolor del pasado."

Push. Shove. Hit. Smack.

"Che vieja, no sirves pa' nada ... pa' nada ... pa' nada."

"But I carry the memories in my skin."

"Still have nightmares about those days."

"Worry about who else he may have hurt."

Frightened. My jaws still clench with the recollection of corajes que me tragué. Still feel the insecurity of breathing too hard, or looking too intensely, when we sisters thought ourselves worthless, afraid to make a peep.

"Remember? Running. Hiding. When we scurried to the corner of the farthest space in the house." Made us feel small, like cucarachas, pretending to hide inside the folds of the over-painted wallpaper that was unevenly peeling from our walls, wanted to escape. We were prisoners in our own home.

Never got away from his wrath. Couldn't run from his fury. Trying to get away, disappear from his grasp, we were dominated by the fear we carried. He was like a leech glued to our soul. Controlled all-tan solo con una mirada-with just a look.

"Must've had radar. He always found us. Made us pay for it too. How dare we try to get away from him?"

Memories. Imagination. Escape.

During this visit, we sisters, finally share recollections remembered. Still attempting to cast aside the pain. Acknowledgement. Don't need the pain any longer.

But our bodies cling to the recuerdos, ready to fend off impending violations. Working on redemption, waiting for the healing that comes with forgiveness.

In sister memories, we recalled our spiritual and religious loss. Talked about the times we tried to love God. When he didn't love us back, because he failed to stop the abuses. Left it in his hands where it stayed. Instead comadre Mary came. Told every thing. Turned him in.

Drew the goodness, and godliness in ourselves to help to cope. Tried to purge it all, without becoming sick, doing drugs, or acting out a sex-dependence.

Depleted. Victorious. That's how we saw each other.

Still, we swam in the memories of our betrayal. As we tried to shed the hurt from repeated physical, psychological and spiritual deaths that fed his ability to violate our trust. Gave him the power but we thrived despite his messages of

worthlessness.

Never loved us, or gave us a chance to love him. We were nothing to him.

But, we all survived, in our own way. Didn't need him for that.

One became the good child who learned to be an expert at forgetting, escaping, and putting the past behind. Burying it so deep that no one could extricate it, no matter how they tried. The one who is still trying to find her worth, even though she knows how strong and resilient she is-she has always felt protected by angels.

"Those memories are best hidden. What for? Don't want to recall things I have long put to rest. ¿Qué me saco? What will I get out of digging old bones?"

Another has reconnected with her spirituality, reclaiming her faith. Says it's what keeps her connected to her greater self.

"My faith in the Lord is what has given me the strength to put it aside," Fel said as she venomously spewed hate for the man who fathered us. The good Christian Catholic, so damaged by his evil, did not even want an "eye for an eye," still hoping to purge him from her life. Claiming to wish nothing than to extricate every drop of his blood from her veins, she still refers to him as the monster.

"If there was a way I could drain every drop of blood that is his, I would do it this minute. I would. I hate him. I hate him. Hate, hate, hate him, and I will never forgive him."

Gave her several moments of silence to regain herself. Sonia lovingly shifted the subject to a discussion of my manuscript, giving her time.

We all joined in silence. Gave out body time to catch up to us.

In that space, I thought that it's not forgiveness for him, but healing of myself that I seek. Pain and hate erode the body and mind. I only want to reclaim myself.

After that period of silence Sonia spoke first. She told me that I would affect the lives of those who silently and numbly go on living with incest and abuse of all types.

"Mague and Fel told me their stories when I was twelve. But yours," which I had not told her, "filled in those early family years. It's clear. You tell the truth-our truth."

And, I was thankful for reliving the past. I felt free of the secret.

"We are 'written' all over, or should I say, carved and tattooed with the sharp needles of experience . . . Some of us are forced to acquire the ability, like a chameleon, to change color when the dangers are many and the options are few."...Gloria Anzaldúa

My body and mind maps experiences I don't wish for anyone. Now, these memories and experiences chart the way for change. They don't ever go away, the memories keep me mindful of seeing and hearing those who hide the secrets we kept-hopefully I will hear and see it when they tell me.

Anzaldúa, Gloria. (1990). "Haciendo Caras, una Entrada: An Introduction," in Gloria Anzaldúa (ed.). *Making Face, Making Soul, Haciendo Caras: Creative and Critical Perspective by Feminists of Color*, SF: Aunt Lute, (xv).



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San Antonio's Cultural Arts Funding Process



Government process is boring. It doesn't sell papers, not even free ones. Yet process is essential to justice; in San Antonio, it is downright revolutionary.

OCA (the Office of Cultural Affairs) is spending time on process, like it or not, and the *Current* is showing its dislike, ridiculing the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center and the Westside Arts Coalition for questioning errors in this year's arts funding process. The concerns involve critical elements - cultural diversity, accurate information, and impartial decision-makers. But you can't see the significance of all this without knowing the history.

A long struggle for cultural equity is reflected in the OCA arts-funding process. The San Antonio City Council imposed racial segregation at all city-owned facilities until 1956. Chicano and Black San Antonians were excluded or dissuaded from other public facilities and most Northside housing areas throughout the 1960s. Prior to 1977, City officials could ignore Latino and Black communities, leaving them with deadly flooding, unpaved roads, abusive and neglectful police, inadequate sewerage and refuse removal, poor transportation services, and minimal fire protection. Libraries and other cultural resources were dedicated to Anglo communities with only minimal provisions for others.

In 1975, the Department of Justice determined that City Council elections violated the Voting Rights Act; in 1977, the City Charter was amended to require single member districts. For the first time, Mexican American and Black voters elected Council representatives. This change gave community activists new opportunities in the struggle for cultural equity.

During the 1980s, with leadership by Councilmember Maria Berriozábal and others, organizations featuring Latina/o and Black culture began to receive a small part of city funding previously reserved for European-focused organizations like the Witte Museum and the Symphony. Funding decisions were unstructured, left largely to the preferences of Councilmembers, and thus serious inequities remained.

In 1993, following "blue ribbon" committee findings and creation of the Department of Cultural Affairs, City Council adopted a Strategic Plan for cultural arts funding. The Plan was written to promote cultural diversity and to extend support to grassroots cultural arts groups and underserved communities. These goals, and the criteria and procedures that were designed to implement them, continue in the current arts funding process. The 2004 statement of objectives for city arts funding reflects its history: "to encourage growth and viability within arts of diverse cultures;" "to affirmatively encourage and facilitate the participation of culturally diverse populations, geographically underserved neighborhoods and economically disadvantaged populations, and the disabled." Audience development, one of three criteria, earns points for applicants that draw "diversity of audience (i.e. a variety of social, economic and racial populations)."

The commitment to cultural equity is also reflected in procedures to be followed. To ensure community input, initial

evaluation of the applications is done by a panel of "independent and objective experts and patrons" on the basis of sufficient, reliable information. "Every effort is made to ensure impartiality," the arts funding procedures tell applicants, "panelists with a conflict will not be permitted to offer an opinion or vote." "Conflict" the rules continue, includes having an "adversarial relationship" with an applicant.

The procedures don't ask why a panelist is adversarial towards an applicant. There may be legitimate or illegitimate reasons - it doesn't matter which. Or the panelist may feel he or she can "put aside" their bias and decide "fairly" - it doesn't matter. The procedures require evaluation by impartial panelists and a panelist who has a conflict of interest "will not be permitted" to participate in the evaluation of that applicant, even if the panelist is excellent at evaluating other applications and even if the panelist sincerely wants to "be fair." Impartiality is critical to fair review, and it must be protected against even the appearance of bias.

Similarly, the procedures require panel scores to be based on sufficient, reliable information. Gossip, rumor, or stereotype are not sufficient. Most panelists understand and respect this, as long as they are given adequate training and information and are assisted by a skilled facilitator. If insufficient information does influence the panel score, through no fault of the applicant, then CAB must change or disregard that score. Unfortunately, the current process does not allow applicants to address the peer panel, even to correct erroneous information.

San Antonio remains divided by race, class, and ethnicity. The commitment to promote cultural diversity is necessary to remedy generations of official and unofficial assault on Mexican-American and Black American cultural expression. Like other civil rights gains, however, commitment to this goal is meaningful only if community groups and individuals are dedicated and courageous enough to identify errors in the process. The Westside Arts Coalition and the Esperanza have done this, during appropriate steps in the process, despite the very real risk of retaliation and ridicule.

To clarify for readers who may have read the *Current*, the Westside Arts Coalition did not accuse CAB members of a "sinister plan" ("Clear as Mud" 7/01/04). We thanked CAB members for their hard-work and commitment, but nevertheless objected that preliminary funding recommendations would decrease funding to grassroots organizations focusing on Latina/o culture, contrary to the goal of cultural equity. Similarly, Esperanza was not "casting about" for a reason to appeal the preliminary recommendation ("Runaway Panel" 8/18/04). We notified OCA before the panel meeting that one of the panelists has an adversarial conflict with the Esperanza, but OCA nevertheless allowed that panelist to participate in discussion and scoring. We also knew right away that the panel score was based on gossip and stereotype, because we attended the panel meeting. The panel said Esperanza does not draw a diverse audience, because we do not have enough Anglos or men in our audiences, and therefore that we should not be given

many points for audience development. No actual information was cited in support of these conclusions, they were just asserted. In fact, Esperanza audiences are very diverse, inclusive, and reflective of the city's population, as this table shows:

Esperanza Audience Compared to City Population by Race/Ethnicity

	Latino	White	Black	Native	Asian
Esperanza	58.95%	23.70%	10.03%	4.14%	3.20%
City	59.04%	31.52%	6.61%	0.60%	1.81%

Esperanza Audience Compared to City Population, by Gender

	Women	Men
Esperanza	65.72%	34.28%
City	51.67%	48.33%

Esperanza Audience Compared to City Population, by Household Income

		\$10,000 - \$29,000	\$29,000 - \$75,000	more than \$75,000
Esperanza	26%	39%	32%	3%
City	10.68%	29.27%	41.99%	18.06%

Cultural equity and the procedures designed to further that goal have been largely disregarded by OCA staff in this year's process. Despite the hard work and good intentions of most CAB members, panelists, and applicants, the arts funding process has failed to fulfill its important purposes. We agree with Felix Padrón and others who say that a process based on peer panel evaluations has the greatest potential for fair funding decisions. Yet this year, peer panelists did not receive the training, information, or facilitation necessary to do their jobs. Moreover, OCA staff recommendations to CAB were based on an hoc formula that disregarded the published criteria. CAB deliberations were poorly facilitated, hapless efforts to legitimize funding recommendations that were deliberated in closed meetings and in closed, written communications among Board members. Although the City Attorney may have advised Mr. Padrón to focus CAB members on the required criteria, this didn't happen until after CAB had calculated its funding recommendations and sent notice to applicants.

Felix Padrón hopes to "overhaul the application process." Will this overhaul include further weakening of the hard-won goal of cultural equity and the procedures it requires? Will this year's process become a model for future years? Who would benefit by that change and who would not? Community groups and individuals must continue to watch and to speak out. Day after day, hit after hit, the struggle continues.

Editor's note: This presentation was made on September 7, 2004 at the Cultural Arts Board Appeals meeting during Citizens to be Heard in response to an article that appeared in the *Current* regarding the Esperanza's funding request and the arts funding process, in general. The text was read by Amy Kastely.

Centro Cultural Aztlán Appeals Arts Funding Decision

By Malena González-Cid

Editor's note: Malena González-Cid, executive director of Centro Cultural Aztlán delivered the following address at the City Cultural Arts Funding Appeals session on September 7, 2004. The appeal was not accepted as valid.

After so many years of working within a funding process that would eventually acknowledge the efforts made by community-based Latino organizations, this year's funding methodology hindered the progress made in addressing inequities of the past.

Previous funding criteria would take into account: history of organization, current level of funding, culturally specific programming and allowed for community based organizations with limited resources to compete at a more even playing field.

There is a substantial decrease in funding for community-based organizations: those of us that promote and enhance the unique cultural aspects of San Antonio and serve a predominately poor and working class constituency.

- We strongly feel that our organization is increasingly responding to community needs.

- We provide opportunities for individuals to experience and participate in a wide range of art forms and cultural activities—ranging from the visual and literary arts to music and dance.

- We have made sure that we are attuned and responding to our community's cultural needs. Our annual events such as the *Lowrider Festivals*, *Día de los Muertos*, *Segundo de Febrero*, *La Virgen de Guadalupe* and other yearly events have allowed us to promote our local culture and preserve cultural traditions.

- We are concerned about serving our geographic community, which is typically underserved, ethnically integrated and culturally specific. We are currently the organization that is best positioned to provide these services in our area.

- We have demonstrated this, for 26 years, even with diminishing resources, a non-affluent constituency and increased expectations.

- We are completely committed to our community and we expect the city's funding process to show an adequate investment to our commitment.

It is our understanding that in your role as CAB members, this body can make recommendations that are separate and independent in order to correct the flaws that occurred during the multidisciplinary panel review and this year's funding process.

We ask that you please take into consideration the impact you have on an organization dependent on these funds. There is no revenue to borrow from or a budget that can be more efficiently balanced that can adjust for an \$18,000 decrease in the next two years. The only option we have is to cut programs to an already marginalized audience. So, while you may feel you are being fair and spreading the budgeted monies equitably, you have, instead, diminished the chances of an organization like ours to continue to exist productively. Without looking at the history of our organization, the current level of funding, and the excellent culturally specific programming we provide you have eliminated much of the criterion that support our specific needs.

We ask that you consider restoring the funds lost during this grant cycle. Your support will enable us to continue extending the arts to underserved populations-those whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by demographics, ethnicity or economics.

What Writers Need to Know

By Kay Murray



Forty-five days after 9/11, President George W. Bush signed into law the “Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act,” known by its acronym, the USA Patriot Act.

Of all the incursions made into civil rights since the terrorists struck, this 342-page law, which passed by overwhelming margins in Congress (98-1 in the Senate; 357-66 in the House), is the broadest. Many of its provisions had been requested for years by federal law enforcement agencies, but Congress consistently rejected them. In the panicked weeks after the attacks, civil rights took a backseat to fear of more attacks. Patriot sailed through without the testimony, interagency review, committee processes, and debate common to almost all other legislation.

Since Patriot became law, a growing chorus of citizens, municipalities, interest groups on both the left and the right, and even many of the lawmakers who voted for it, is voicing grave concern over the expanded powers it gives the government to spy on Americans and legal aliens. The White House and law enforcement agencies have staunchly defended Patriot, citing (though without giving details) its key role in thwarting terrorist plots and downplaying its effects on citizens’ free-speech and privacy rights.

Who’s right? It’s impossible to explain here every provision of this massive piece of legislation, which amended at least 15 existing laws (and which contains many uncontroversial provisions). But there are provisions that directly affect writers and their interests. It is imperative for writers to be aware of these provisions so that they can draw their own conclusions about whether parts of the act should be weakened, allowed to expire, or strengthened (as the administration proposes).



BASIC PROVISIONS OF PATRIOT

In a nutshell, the act gives federal law enforcement agencies (for example, the FBI, Justice Department, U.S. Attorneys) and foreign intelligence surveillance agencies (the CIA, NSA, Pentagon, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services [USCIS, formerly known as Immigration and Naturalization Service or INS], Secret Service) more tools and greater leeway to spy on citizens (and legal aliens) in national security and criminal investigations. It does so in the following ways (among others):

- Makes it much easier for domestic law enforcement to use tools like roving wiretaps and phone taps
- Lowers the standard needed to convince a court to issue search warrants and subpoenas (probable cause to believe a crime is being committed or planned is no longer needed)
- Greatly expands the scope of third-party records subject to subpoena
- Permits domestic and foreign intelligence agencies to share information gathered about citizens more easily
- Allows individual district courts to issue nationwide search warrants and wiretap orders
- Permits agencies to spy—even to exercise a search warrant without notifying the person being searched

- Expands the type of information subject to surveillance to include e-mail and other online activity
- Forbids citizens subject to surveillance to challenge it in court except after the fact if they are charged with a crime

Before Patriot, most warrants and permissions to wiretap expired after 30 days, unless renewed by the issuing court. Also, the agencies typically had to report the results of their surveillance to that court. These days, warrants and wiretaps can extend to 180 days without court review, and, in many cases, agencies no longer have to report their results.

Foreign intelligence agencies investigating a crime have never needed to get permission from a secret “FISA” (Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act) court to spy on U.S. citizens. An agency had to tell the court only that it was investigating a citizen in conjunction with a foreign agent or nation. Before Patriot, it did have to show the court that “the purpose” of the spying was to get foreign intelligence information; now they need only show “significant purpose.”

The lowering of so many privacy safeguards might not seem so troubling if it applied only to suspected terrorists or other felons—but it doesn’t. Except in a few situations, the targets of these surveillance methods need not be suspected of terrorism, criminal activity, or spying. The agency doing the surveillance must merely show that information sought *might* be related to an ongoing national security investigation. Journalists investigating terrorism or other crimes, for example, now may be prime targets of surveillance themselves.

Substantively, the act introduced a new offense, “domestic terrorism,” defined as “involving acts dangerous to human life,” or engaging in violence that damages private property in order to “influence government policy by intimidation or coercion.” This broad definition could encompass the activities of advocacy groups such as Greenpeace and Operation Rescue, should their activities result in injury or property damage. The act also expanded the definition of “terrorist acts” to include offering support—including professional advice and advocacy—to “terrorist groups” designated as such by the secretary of state (publicly or not), and made computer-trespassing crimes subject to much harsher penalties.

THE “WALL” COMES DOWN

Many of the restrictions on surveillance that Patriot eliminated were imposed in the 1970s, after the country learned of the politically motivated spying committed by Hoover’s FBI and the CIA against half a million U.S. citizens. Among the most important of the restrictions eased by Patriot was the so-called “wall” erected between law enforcement and foreign intelligence agencies.

Different agencies exist to investigate different things. The FBI, for example, pursues domestic and international crime, but foreign intelligence agencies may investigate espionage activity even if no crime is suspected. For this reason, the privacy protections imposed on the surveillance methods used by each agency are different. To prevent each agency from committing an end run around the particular restrictions on its behavior, Congress forbade them to

share what they’d collected with one another. It required them to get a court’s permission to share any information and strictly limited the information shared to what was relevant to each agency’s particular investigation.

After revelations of the problems the FBI and CIA had had in “connecting the dots” about some of the 9/11 hijackers, Patriot tore down most of this wall in national security investigations. It now allows wiretap and other surveillance information collected in a criminal case to be shared with foreign intelligence agencies if the information constitutes “foreign intelligence information,” and vice versa.



SECTION 215

Perhaps the most controversial part of the act is section 215. It gives the FBI unprecedented access to the communication, research, and reading habits of the public. Before Patriot, the FBI could subpoena business records only from rental-car agencies, transportation services, storage facilities, and the like. Section 215 allows the government to get “any tangible thing” via a subpoena—library, academic, financial, travel, and medical records; bookstore transaction receipts; Internet use logs; and so on. A secret court in a closed proceeding must issue the subpoena on request without the FBI having to show probable cause or even reasonable grounds to believe the subject is engaged in terrorism or other crime. It doesn’t even have to show how or why it might need the records, only that they are relevant to an ongoing national security investigation.

Patriot forbids recipients of a section 215 subpoena to tell anyone that they received it. The only limit to the government’s power here is that the investigation may not be based “solely” on a citizen’s First Amendment activities (though it can be based solely on a noncitizen’s First Amendment activities). Based on this limit, the Justice Department claims that the alarm expressed by the American Library Association, the American Booksellers Association, and other publishing industry groups over section 215 is excessive.

Opponents point out that even if agents of the FBI never misuse their new power, the very fact that the government can study what people are reading threatens our intellectual freedom by inhibiting what we choose to read—a classic chilling effect on free expression. Protests against section 215 cut across the political spectrum. Organizations as varied as the American Conservative Union, the NRA, the Electronic Frontier Foundation, and the NAACP decry its intrusion into privacy.

Opposition to section 215 is widespread and active, notably within the book community. At least four states and 299 communities have passed resolutions opposing this part of Patriot and recommending that local businesses and institutions, especially libraries and bookstores, destroy or not gather information that identifies patrons by name.

The ACLU has sued to challenge section 215’s gag order as violating the First Amendment. A district court judge in Detroit is expected to rule on the government’s motion to dismiss the suit this year. In a separate suit, the ACLU and an unnamed Internet service provider that received an FBI “National Security Letter” demanding customer records sued over the forced disclosure of personal information without any judicial oversight. (Before Patriot, the FBI could issue NSLs only to those actually suspected of terrorism or of being foreign spies.) Patriot’s gag order prevented the plaintiffs from divulging the existence of the suit for weeks until they were able to negotiate with the government about what little

they were permitted to say publicly. The ACLU has moved for the public release of more information in the case and for summary judgment. The motions are under consideration by a district court in New York City.

In a speech last fall in which he defended the Patriot Act, Attorney General John Ashcroft called concerns about section 215 “baseless hysteria” and said that it had never been used against a library or bookstore. A survey done a few months later of more than 500 libraries in Illinois showed that 7 had received FBI requests for information about patrons or borrowing records and another 17 had gotten requests from police or other agencies. Eight of the 24 reported that the requests were made for a national-security investigation. An earlier study cited by the ACLU said more than 85 out of some 1,500 libraries nationwide had been approached by December 2001. The Justice Department now says the number of libraries subpoenaed is “classified information.”



THE PROGNOSIS FOR PATRIOT

Much of the Patriot Act, including section 215, will expire at the end of 2005. The president has recently called for those expiring provisions to be renewed permanently. One of the most troubling aspects of the act is that the Congress that must decide whether to renew these provisions has only limited oversight of how and to what end the expanded powers are being used. In a June 2002 hearing, the Justice Department would not give the House Judiciary Committee information it sought about the results of the greater surveillance under Patriot, claiming that much of the information Congress requested is “classified.”

The Administration has drafted new legislation, dubbed “Patriot II,” details of which were leaked late last year. This bill would, among other things, expand the wiretapping authority of the agencies and allow for collection of DNA samples of innocent citizens. After loud public protests from even some administration supporters, the legislation was not introduced, but it wasn’t disavowed, either. The ACLU has expressed concerns that some parts of Patriot II will be added piecemeal to existing legislation.

More than 150 legislators, including Democrats, Independents, and Republicans, are sponsoring legislation that would amend section 215. The various bills include the Freedom to Read Protection Act, which would exempt bookstores and libraries from the subpoenas and the Security and Freedom Ensured (SAFE) Act, which would require a stronger showing of necessity to issue subpoenas.

IF YOU WANT TO TAKE ACTION

In February, PEN American Center, the American Library Association, and the American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression started a drive to collect one million signatures for a petition to Congress in support of the numerous bills introduced to limit the broad subpoena power over libraries and bookstores. You can sign the petition online by visiting: www.readerprivacy.com. At the same Web site, there are detailed instructions for contacting your representatives to enlist their support for the various bills.



The ACLU, which has been very active in challenging and monitoring the Patriot Act, offers many ways for people to, as they put it, “keep America safe and free.” Find out more at: www.aclu.org.

Kay Murray is general counsel and assistant director of the Authors Guild, the nation’s largest organization of published writers. This article was reprinted in La Voz with permission from Poets & Writers™, a registered trademark of Poets & Writers, Inc.

The Gandhi Peace Mission to Israel

By Dee Villarrubia

Editor's note: Arun Gandhi, grandson of Mohandas Gandhi, led a tour of Israel and Palestine organized in the U.S. by San Antonio-based Palestinians for Peace and Democracy and in the Middle East by a new coalition, the Palestinian Campaign for Freedom and Peace. For more, visit www.p4pd.org/blogger.html. Thanks to KPL and Susan Ives for their contributions.

This is an eyewitness Jewish account of my participation in the Peace Mission to Israel and Jerusalem led by Arun Gandhi. I began Torah studies in 1993, converted and became a Bat Mitzvah, daughter of the Covenant on Shavuot 1999 because I admired the social justice history of the Jewish people, particularly during our civil rights struggles. When invited to join the tour, I knew I had to go on this mission.

On August 26th the main events were held: the meeting with President Arafat and a massive peace rally in Ramallah of some 2,000 Palestinians and Israelis, attended by Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Ahmed Qurei. We marched through the streets in the noon heat until we came to the Wall. Arun Gandhi stood in front of the 26-foot-high concrete Wall that separates Abu Dis from Jerusalem saying, "I have come to this rally to protest two kinds of injustice, the injustice of a wall which separates between people, and the injustice of prisoners being treated worse than animals. Arabic and Hebrew chants responded, "Peace Yes! Occupation No! The wall will fall, the wall will fall."

We spoke through interpreters with mothers, sons and daughters who held up photos of sons, daughters and fathers held as prisoners. Gandhi and the delegation fasted on Friday in solidarity with the hunger strike waged by the 7,500 Palestinian prisoners.



We visited Augusta Victoria Hospital where we learned that the Walls surrounding every Palestinian city and ID cards were keeping them from the only hospital that would admit them. Israelis have fourteen hospitals.

On Saturday, August 28th we toured the Wall in Tulkarem, Qalqilya and Jaiyous, rural areas. We met with farmers who have been separated from their farms by the Wall. They have to go through checkpoints staffed by nervous young Israelis with rifles which takes from 1-2 hours as there is only one exit for every city or farm.

On our last day of the tour, August 30th, we visited Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Museum to give us a sense of the ultimate fear motivating the Israelis – every suicide bomber awakens the fears of another Holocaust. We must deal with the fears and injustices of both sides. "There is no way to Peace; Peace is the way."

On Yom Kippur, Day of Atonement for our sins, we read from Leviticus 19, about the stranger, the alien, in the Jewish community. "When strangers live with you in your land, you must not oppress them. The strangers who live with you shall be to you like citizens. You shall love them as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt."



A CALL FOR JUSTICE IN THE MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM

By Frank Valdez

Author's note: The following is an abridged version of an e-mail sent to advocates all over the United States. The intention is for advocates to rethink our strategies and consider intensifying our efforts to reform the mental health system in our nation. It in NO way is an unjustified criticism of past activities or a call for either violent or criminal means of gaining the attention of our elected leaders.

Two years ago George W. Bush promised that he would push for federal legislation that would give us Mental Health Parity and outlaw insurance discrimination in regards to how mental health treatment was considered and disbursed. Today we still have NO mental health parity despite heroic efforts by the late Senator Paul Wellstone from Minnesota and others. Despite thousands of e-mails, thousands of phone calls, thousands of letters mental health parity remains a dream.

Meanwhile accessibility to quality mental health services continues to worsen as state legislatures cut already inadequate mental health funding. Regardless of whether we receive our treatment from a private doctor or the public mental health clinic, our services are FAR from being what they should be!

Due to this growing inaccessibility and discrimination, mental health consumers are finding their quality of life deteriorating even further. Lack of quality mental health services has led to frequent hospitalizations, suicide attempts, broken homes, criminal activity, substance abuse, homelessness and lives that are generally unproductive and unhappy.

For children that are unable to access quality mental health services the situation is worse. Can you imagine having your life end before it can even begin? Children unable to get the needed treatment wind up in the juvenile probation system, committing suicide, failing in school, being the butt of much cruel harassment, etc. To deny children needed mental health services is cruel and should be considered a crime against humanity!

In 1948 the United Nations had the wisdom and foresight to adopt a document known as the Universal Declaration of

Human Rights. Among these rights is included the right to healthcare which also includes mental health care. The United States to this day refuses to support this principle and chooses to continue with the obsolete notion that healthcare is a privilege and a commodity, rather than a basic human right.

When we look at history we see that human rights have not been a priority for our government and those in power. We must ask ourselves why is this occurring in a nation as wealthy as ours?

As a teenager I recall the struggles of the Civil Rights Movement in this nation. The government did not GIVE us anything! These precious rights were won through hard and persistent struggle. People went to jail, they were beaten, had dogs unleashed on them, some even died. Only after thousands and thousands of people continued to march, sit in, boycott and caused international embarrassment to this nation did President Lyndon Johnson finally sign into law the Civil Rights Act. We must also remember that the tactics of the civil rights movement did not utilize violence. Dr. King instead chose to use non-violence, a technique perfected by Mahatma Gandhi in India's struggle for liberation from England.

While lobbying, telephone calls, and letter writing are good they also have their limit. If we are real with ourselves we must admit such activity is pretty passive considering the grave nature that mental health consumers and their loved ones are in. If we are as serious about making changes in the mental health system as we say we are, then it is now time to put this concern and anger into action! Non-violent tactics and strategies worked for the civil rights movement and can work for us as well. The question is how serious are we about getting the respect and dignity we all deserve for our loved one and ourselves? Are we ready to think outside the box and embark on new, more creative ways to get our point across? The success of our movement lies within each and every one of us.



Frank Valdez is a social worker, long time social justice activist and newly elected Board Member of NAMI San Antonio.

Calpulli Tlalpalcalli Presents The 10th Annual
Four Directions Youth and Elders Gathering
 Friday • Saturday • Sunday October 8, 9, & 10, 2004 Casa Mata, Matamoros, Tamaulipas, Mexico
 FEATURING
 Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice • UNIDOS SIN FRONTERA • U.S. / México Border Mobilization
 Demostración el sábado 9 de octubre, desde las 11:00 a 2:00 **March and rally on Saturday October 9, from 11:00 to 2:00**
 Gateway International Bridge • Matamoros, Tamaulipas, México
ELDERS CIRCLE AND HONOR GUEST SPEAKERS
 • CAPITANA GENERALA JOSEPHINA GARCIA, MEXICA TENOCHCA • LEONA BULLBEAR, OGLALA-LAKOTA
 • GARVARD GOODPLUME, OGLALA LAKOTA • JOHN C. SMITH, DINE ELDER • FLOYD BEGAY, DINE ELDER
 For more information contact Calpulli Tlalpalcalli (956) 748.9159

Community Meetings

San Antonio NOW meets the fourth Wednesday of the month at La Madeline restaurant on Broadway. (across from Central Market) 6:30pm. Our Phone is: 210 673 8600 Our Address is: Box 34551, 78265-4551

Parents/Friends of Lesbians/ Gays (PFLAG) Meets the first Thursday of each month at 7 pm at the Resource Center, 121 W. Woodlawn, call 655-2383.

A Multicultural Worship Service is held Sundays at 11 am at **Spirit of Life Lutheran Church**, call Rev. Kay Johnson at 691-5937, the sanctuary of Los Angeles Heights Methodist.

Amnesty International #127 Meets the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm at Ashbury United Methodist, call 829-0397.

Fuerza Unida at 710 New Laredo Hwy. Call for information and meeting times, 927-2297.

Proyecto Hospitalidad Liturgy meets Thursdays at 7 pm at 325 Courtland, call 736-3579.

Society of Friends meets on Sundays at 10 am at Friends Meeting House, 7052 N. Vandiver, call 945-8456.

S.N.A.P. Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests meets the last Wednesday of each month at 7 pm at 1443 S. St. Mary's, call 725-8329.

Xicana Xicano Education Project meets Wednesdays at 2 pm at the Bazan Public Library, 2200 W. Commerce St., call 437-5196.

Solidarity: Peer Support for Mental Health Consumers, meets the first and third Saturday monthly, 10:30 am at the Travis Park United Methodist Church, Rm 210. Call 734-7527.

Bexar County Green Party meets the first Sunday of each month at 2 pm at Picante Grill, 3810 Broadway.

Habitat for Humanity holds Volunteer Orientation on first Tuesdays of each month at 1st Presbyterian Church, 404 N. Alamo, room 302 at 6 pm.

DIGNITY S.A. holds mass every Sunday at 5:15 pm at St. Ann's Convent, call 735-7191.

The Shambhala Buddhist Meditation Center offers meditation instruction on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7pm and on Sundays at 11:30 am. It also offers meditation practice on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7pm and on Sundays from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm at 1114. South St. Mary's Call 210-222-9303.



Do you work for a public school, the City of San Antonio, Bexar County, the State of Texas, or the Federal Government?

The Esperanza is part of **Another Way Texas Shares.** Sign-up to donate monthly to the Esperanza directly from your paycheck at work through the **State Employee Charitable Campaign**

Bexar County Government Local Charitable Campaign
City of San Antonio Local Charitable Campaign
 and the
Combined School District Charitable Campaign
Esperanza Peace & Justice Center
Code #8035

or call us at 228.0201 to sign-up with our electronic direct deposit program!

Notas Y Más

Brief notes to inform **La Voz** readers about events, issues and happenings in the community. Send announcements for **Notas y Más** to: lavoze@esperanzacenter.org or by snail mail to: 922 San Pedro, San Antonio, TX 78212. The deadline is the 12th of each month.

An exhibition of vintage photographs, *Mi Viejo San Antonio*, from the **Tino Duran Collection** continues at **Galería Expression** at **Centro Cultural Aztlán**, 803 Castroville Road, Suite 402 in the Las Palmas Shopping Mall until October 8, 2004. Viewing hours are Monday to Friday from 10 am - 5 pm.

Plan Z Media is looking for creative videos of any genre on the issue of *Terrorism*. A compilation show will be done with a selection from the works submitted. A compilation DVD will also be edited for further distribution through the Plan Z video catalog available on line. If interested, please send your work to: Plan Z Media, c/o MIR, 626 Sheridan Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15206, USA. **Deadline:** October 1, 2004. Call (412) 363-9730.

The *First Friday Reading Series* at **Gemini Ink** at 513 S. Presa continues on October 1st at 6-7:30 p.m. featuring Ken Cook and Rudi Harst. Admission is free. Gemini Ink's October Calendar includes "Reading Abroad," a poetry class with Susan Briante and Farid Matuk; "Celebrating Elder Wisdom" with Jan Seale, and "Long Live Death," a *Día del los Muertos* altar-building/calaveras-writing class with Tita Valencia. Call 734.9673 for info.

Gemini Ink and **Jump-Start** present a day-long (11am-7pm) spoken-word festival, *Words in Common: Encountering the New Spoken Word Forms* on October 2nd with performances by national performance artists Aya De León and Robert Karimi, and San Antonio and Austin activists as well. At Jump-Start, in the Blue Star Arts Complex. Call 734.9673.

The **National Association of Latino Arts & Culture's** 5th National Conference, *ARTE Y CULTURA: EL CORAZÓN DE LAS AMERICAS, NALAC IN THE HEARTLAND* is set for October 6-10, 2004 in Kansas City, Missouri. Contact: info@nalac.org

The **International Accordion Festival**, a free two-day festival that is open to the public will take place at La Villita on October 16 - 17. The festival includes workshops and performances as well as booths selling food and drinks. Contact: www.internationalaccordionfestival.org

The **Center for Mexican American Studies (CMAS)** and the **Center for Women's and Gender Studies** at UT Austin, together with the **Austin Latina/o Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Organization (ALLGO)**, **Red Salmon Press/Resistencia Bookstore**, and **BookWoman** will sponsor a two-day tribute in Austin, Texas to Gloria Evangelina Anzaldúa on Friday, October 22 and Saturday, October 23, 2004. The tribute will also include a dialogue on diabetes, a disease that disproportionately affects Latinas and that ended Anzaldúa's life prematurely. Contact: virginiaraymond@mail.utexas.edu

For more than a decade, the cities of Chihuahua and Juárez, near the U.S.-Mexico border, have been killing fields for young women, the site of over 380 unsolved femicides. From October 20th - 30th, four caravans will travel across the U.S. and two will travel across Mexico, converging on the Juárez/El Paso border October 31st to November 4th for the **International Delegation and Convergence in Juárez and Chihuahua**. The Caravan will raise consciousness about the murders and about conditions faced by women along the border. The Caravan arrives in San Antonio on October 29th with activities being co-hosted by Esperanza's **Mujerartes** as well as other SA groups. For information contact: MSN@MexicoSolidarity.org. Locally, contact the Esperanza at 228-0201 or **Mujerartes** at 223-2585.

ÓRALE: FEAR OF A BROWN NATION is the working title of a forthcoming book which is now in its initial stages of organization. The book, edited by Richard Martínez and Bárbara Renaud González, will be an anthology of articles that creatively challenge and address the fear epitomized by Samuel P. Huntington's latest writings that whites have of Latinos and the browning of America. This promises to be a very special book with a mix of scholars, writers and artists -- who speak, write, and act beyond the conventional assimilationist paradigm. Essays and art are to be collected by late November, 2004. For guidelines, contact: Rich at chicanoselfreliance@yahoo.com or Bárbara at nomedejo@hotmail.com

The producers for a new public access show, **The 411 Show** are currently looking for young, local talent for interviews and artistic performances. Youth ages 11 to 19 who would like to participate in interviews or ages 6 to 19 for performances may call to be interviewed. Talents from a variety of cultures are encouraged to audition. All potential participants must be available for filming weekdays or weekends, from 9 am to 4 pm. This is not a paid performance, but is to give exposure to young artists interested in the media arts. Call Patsy Robles at 210-789-3143 for auditions or information.

The **Chiapas Media Project (CMP)** seeks university, cultural centers and community-based sponsors to host screenings on our 9th annual fall tour September-November 2004. The tour will feature new videos produced by indigenous video makers from the states of Chiapas and Guerrero, México. Dates are scheduled on a first come, first-served basis. The Chiapas Media Project is an award winning, bi-national partnership that provides video equipment, computers and training enabling marginalized indigenous and campesino communities in Southern Mexico to create their own media. The CMP is currently distributing 20 indigenous produced videos worldwide and asks only for an honorarium based on the means of the host organization. Check www.chiapasmediaproject.org or call Alex at 773-583-7728 or e-mail us at: cmp@chiapasmediaproject.org

Betita Martínez continues to work on the book, **500 Years of Chicana History**. With 48 pages finished, including the bilingual text with photos and graphics, 200-275 pages remain for completion of the book. Archival and library fees as well as expenses for photography, staff and office costs continue to mount. Financial contributions from community activists and folks looking forward to the completion of this special publication are welcome! Ideas for possible sources of help are also hugely appreciated. Adelante! Let's push this forward! Contact Betita at (415)648-4731 or email her at Betita1@aol.com



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Lila Downs Canta en el Westside Saturday October 2, 2004 7:00 p.m. at Plaza Guadalupe

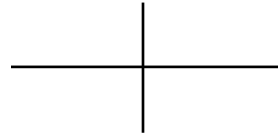
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Esperanza - sponsored Día de los muertos events

Calavera Writing Workshop

October 9th, 2004, 9:30 am to 1 pm.

Esperanza's La Casa de Cuentos, 816 S. Colorado
Calaveras is a poetic art form which uses satire to make fun of the living, particularly politicians, movie stars, and the like. Don Manuel Castillo Espino published Calaveras annually in San Antonio until his death a few years ago. La Voz has kept the tradition alive in San Antonio since 1999. Join Esperanza Calaveristas for the 5th year of word play and fun. Calaveras will be published in next month's Voz with a possible performance, si se animan, for Día de los Muertos. Limited to 20 participants.

Sign up at 228-0201 or at lavoz@esperanzacenter.org.

Ofrenda de Jardines

October 29th to November 2nd, 2004

Call Michael at 228-0201

Gardens of flowers with cempaxuchitl and ofrendas will be on display and growing in the Westside of San Antonio in observance of Días de los Muertos. Sites include Casa de Mujerartes at 1412 El Paso, Plaza Avenida Guadalupe, La Tiendita at 2113 Guadalupe, Esperanza's Casa de Cuentos, 816 Colorado, Centro Cultural Atzlán at the Las Palmas Shopping Center and the Texas Diabetes institute on Zarzamora.

For information on other Día de los Muertos events contact 432.1846 • www.sacalaveras.com



Recordando a Las Mujeres de Juárez

October 29th, 2004, time TBA

Casita de Mujerartes, 1412 El Paso

Call Cindy at 210/223-2585.

Visit with members of the the International Caravan for Justice in Juárez & Chihuahua and learn about the murders of 300+ mujeres in Juárez which have taken place for over a decade. This is the last stop of a 10-day tour from the northeastern U. S. Representatives from the Mexico Solidarity Network and mothers of victims will speak about the conditions along the border, which allow these killings to continue. Mujerartes will host this event as they prepare for the Día de los Muertos Mercado.

Mercado de Muertos: Venta de Artesanía

October 30th, 2004, from 9 am to 6 pm

Casita de Mujerartes, 1412 El Paso

Call Cindy at 223-2585

Stop by for the first annual Día de los Muertos sale of ceramic and clay skulls, calaveras, sahumerios (incense burners), calacas (skeletons) and other Day of the Dead figures all handmade, at the Mujerartes' casita. Open for visitation and buying of Día de muertos gifts. all day. An event for toda la familia.